

## Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 INRE-00 USIE-00 CIAE-00

DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-04

RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 OMB-01 EB-11 DRC-01 IO-14

ACDA-19 AID-20 IGA-02 /151 W  
----- 042729

O 182116Z DEC 73

FM AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5904

INFO AMEMBASSY MEXICO

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

CINCSO

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE IMMEDIATE

AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 TEGUCIGALPA 4702

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PBOR, PFOR, HO, ES

SUBJECT: GOH POSITION ON TERMINATION OF TALKS WITH SALVADOR

1. SUMMARY: FONMIN BATRES IS RELATIVELY RELAXED RE END OF BILATERAL TALKS. HE SAYS GOH HAS NO IMMEDIATE FIXED PLANS, BUT WOULD WELCOME AND STUDY INITIATIVES OR SUGGESTIONS FROM OTHER CA COUNTRIES. HE FAVORS SOME KIND OF JOINT DECLARATION OF GOOD INTENTIONS BY BOTH GOVERNMENTS TO ROUND OFF PRESENT EPISODE. END SUMMARY.

2. DCM AND I CALLED ON FONMIN BATRES DECEMBER 18 TO DISCUSS POSITION OF GOH ON TALKS WITH SALVADOR. I EXPRESSED OUR DISAPPOINTMENT AT DEADLOCK, AND ASKED FOR SOME DETAILS.

3. BATRES SAID THAT IN EFFECT NO ADDITIONAL POINTS OF AGREEMENT WERE ACHIEVED DURING FINAL WEEK OF TALKS. SALVADORANS

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HAD REFUSED TO DRAFT ANYTHING AT ALL RE FRONTIER

QUESTION, SO NOTHING WAS DRIFTED ON ANYTHING ELSE. GOES REJECTED ANTIGUA AGREEMENT ON FRONTIER, WHICH GOH CONSIDERED NECESSARY POINT OF DEPARTURE. IN FACT, THIS WAS ALSO WHAT PRESIDENTS HAD AGREED ON IN JALAPA; THAT BOTH SIDES WOULD ISSUE STATEMENTS OF AGREEMENT ON 80 PERCENT OF FRONTIER WHICH HAD BEEN CLARIFIED OR DEFINED IN ANTIGUA. AS MEANS TO DO THIS, GOH PROPOSED THAT EACH SIDE ISSUE UNILATERAL STATEMENT AND MAP OF ITS OWN POSITION AND CLAIMS. IN PRACTICE, THESE WOULD PRESUMABLY SHOW THE 80 PERCENT AGREEMENT ON THE LINE. GOH ISSUED SUCH DEFINITION, BUT SALVADORANS MERELY ACCEPTED IT, AND DECLINED TO ISSUE ANY DEFINITION OF THEIR OWN.

4. GOES DELEGATION DID NOT EVEN OFFICIALLY REQUEST POSTPONEMENT OF TALKS, ACCORDING TO BATRES. GALINDO POHL HAD MADE SUCH REQUEST INFORMALLY, BUT BATRES REPLIED THAT HE COULD NOT AGREE TO POSTPONEMENT UNLESS IT WAS ACCOMPANIED BY SOME VISIBLE EVIDENCE OF PROGRESS MADE TO DATE. HE HAD FELT THAT A DEFINITION OF 80 PERCENT AGREEMENT WOULD HAVE BEEN SUCH SUITABLE EVIDENCE, BUT SALVADORANS BALKED.

5. BATRES REMARKED THAT GOH HAD NO IMMEDIATE PLANS AS TO NEXT STEP. I NOTED THAT SOME FOLLOW-UP ACTION OR DECLARATION WOULD APPEAR TO BE DESIRABLE; THAT IF NOTHING WERE DONE OR SAID, THERE COULD BE A DANGEROUS PSYCHOLOGICAL LET DOWN, AND THAT POPULAR APPREHENSIONS MIGHT GROW TO IMPEDE ANY DEVELOPMENTS IN THE FUTURE.

6. BATRES AGREED. HE SAID THAT THERE WAS A DEFINITE UNEASE IN THE COUNTRY, PARTICULARLY IN THE BORDER AREAS OF HONDURAS. EVEN GOH WAS SOMEWHAT LEERY OF SITUATION, AS THEY HAD REPORTS OF ARMS BEING ISSUED TO CIVILIANS, SHIFTING OF AA GUNS TO DAMS, ETC. HE RECEIVED A PHONE CALL FROM HIS RELATIVES IN ESPERANZA YESTERDAY, SAYING THERE WAS SOME ALARM ON THE BORDER, WITH PEOPLE COMING INTO ESPERANZA. BATRES SAID HE TOLD HIS RELATIVES TO BE CALM; THAT NOTHING WAS GOING TO HAPPEN.

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7. BATRES AGREED THAT SOME KIND OF MOVE WOULD BE USEFUL TO CALM NERVES ON BOTH SIDES. BATRES THOUGHT THAT WORKABLE ARRANGEMENTS WOULD BE FOR OTHER COUNTRIES JOINTLY TO CALL ON GOH AND GOES TO CLARIFY THEIR VIEWS AND INTENTIONS. THIS COULD BE DONE BY TELEGRAM, AND EACH COUNTRY COULD REPLY STATING ITS AIM OF ABIDING BY PURELY PEACEFUL MEANS TO RESOLVE

CONTROVERSY. HE PREFERRED TELEGRAMS TO ANOTHER MEETING, WHICH HE THOUGHT WOULD AGAIN AROUSE EXPECTATIONS. HOWEVER, HE FELT GENERAL SOMOZA WOULD KEEP TRYING TO ARRANGE A MEETING, AND GOH HAS NOT DISCARDED POSSIBILITY. (COMMENT: GENERAL LOPEZ TOLD ME ON PREVIOUS DAY THAT NO MEETING WAS NOW SCHEDULED BECAUSE OF ARANA'S ILLNESS) BATRES SAID HIS PREFERENCE WOULD BE FOR ALL CAS (AND POSSIBLY PANAMA) TO PARTICIPATE IN ANY INITIATIVE. THIS WOULD BE BETTER (FASTER) AEGIS AT MOMENT THAN OAS.

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8. I ASKED ABOUT THE STATUS OF FONMIN ARENALES' PROPOSAL (GUATEMALA 5768). BATRES SAID THAT ARENALES WANTED TO MEET WITH HIM AND BORGONOVO, BUT BORGONOVO NEVER RESPONDED TO THE SUGGESTION. BATRES SAID HE WOULD RATHER MEET UNDER UMBRELLA OF ALL FIVE OR SIX CA COUNTRIES, BECAUSE BOTH GUATEMALA AND NICARAGUA HAD "SPECIAL INTERESTS"

IN A SETTLEMENT, WHICH HE THOUGHT WOULD BEST BE  
SUBMERGED IN A GENERALIZED APPROACH.

9. BATRES IS GOING TO NICARAGUA ON DECEMBER 20  
TO BRIEF THE GON ON GOH POSITIONS. THAT NIGHT HE  
WILL BE INTERVIEWED IN TEGUCIGALPA. HE WILL TAKE  
LINE THAT GOH IS PRESENTLY TAKING NO INITIATIVE TO  
RENEW CONTACTS, BUT WILL SERIOUSLY CONSIDER ANY  
CONSTRUCTIVE SUGGESTIONS OR POSSIBILITIES ADVANCED  
TO IT.

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10. BATRES SAID THAT IN A PRIVATE TALK IN MEXICO CITY,  
SOMOZA HAD TOLD HIM THAT PRESIDENT MOLINA WAS VERY  
WEAK PRESIDENT, AND LACKED ANY REAL CONTROL OF THE  
ARMED FORCES. MOLINA WAS GENUINELY FEARFUL THAT  
ANY CONCESSIONS COULD BE USED AGAINST HIM, AND AT  
THE LEAST MIGHT CAUSE A GOVERNMENT DEFEAT IN THE  
COMING ELECTIONS. BATRES SAID HIS OWN FEELING WAS  
THAT POPULACE AND BUSINESSMEN IN SALVADOR WOULD  
WELCOME SOLUTION, BUT REAL PROBLEM WAS THE ARMY.

1. SOMOZA CONFIRMED TO BATRES THAT SALVADOR WAS  
EARLIER ABOUT TO START MOBILIZATION. SOMOZA HAD  
CALLED MOLINA AND PERSUADED HIM TO CALL IT OFF.  
HE REMINDED MOLINA THAT PRESIDENT SANCHEZ HAD  
DON THE SAME THING IN 1969, AND THAT THE SITUATION  
AND THE SALVADORAN MILITARY THEREAFTER SLIPPED FROM  
HIS CONTROL AND ROBBED HIM OF ANY CHANCE TO AVOID  
WAR. BATRES EXPRESSED PROFOUND GRATITUDE FOR  
THIS ACT OF SOMOZA'S. IF SALVADORAN MOBILIZATION  
HAD STARTED, ANY PRUDENT GOH HEAD OF STATE WOULD HAVE  
HAD TO RESPOND IN KIND. THIS COULD HAVE RESULTED IN WAR,  
AS THERE ARE PLENTY OF YOUNG OFFICERS IN BOTH COUNTRIES WHO  
WOULD ENJOY RESUMING "THE BOXING MATCH". BATRES  
EXPRESSED HIS PERSONAL ADMIRATION FOR GENERAL LOPES'  
"TRANQUILLITY" THROUGHOUT.

12. COMMENT: I RECEIVED AN IMPRESSION OF RELAXATION  
ON THE MATTER AND DO NOT BELIEVE THAT GOH IS PLANNING TO  
SLAM DOORS OR MAKE A GREAT NOISE. I THINK THE HONDURANS  
WOULD LIKE TO CLOSE OUT THIS LASTEST ENGAGEMENT WITH LOW  
KEY ROUNDUP, AT THE SAME TIME KEEPING OPEN POSSIBILITIES  
AND HOPES FOR RESUMPTION OF TALKS IN NOT TOO DISTANT  
FUTURE. BATRES VERY PROUD OF GOH "NON-REACTION" TO GOES  
DENUNICIATION OF BOGOTA PACT.  
SANCHEZ

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## Message Attributes

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